



STILL SERVING

Published by 11th Wing Retiree Activities Offices, National Capital Area

June 2013

ONLINE NEWSLETTER IS POSSIBLE

The impact of budgetary uncertainty has forced the Air Force to reduce expenditures, especially in operations and maintenance (See Page 4). Such niceties as air shows, conferences, seminars and local contracts were among the first casualties of “near term actions.” Among these were two subjects of interest to area retirees and their families. For the second time in three years, the scheduled annual Air Force Retiree Council meetings at Randolph AFB, Tex., were canceled. Of a more personal matter, this Still Serving edition could be the last “hard copy” to be delivered to your home (See Page 2). Every effort is being made to continue producing this product, but in all probability you’ll have to go online to read it or, better yet, print your personal copy. Retiree Activities Offices at Andrews and Bolling become even more important as your link to today’s Air Force and activities of interest to the retiree community in the National Capital Area. This newsletter will continue to be available as a link from the Joint Andrews website (www.andrews.af.mil, click on “retirees”). Additional website outlets are being sought. Ideally, new issues will be posted in February, June and October. Overall, the Air Force retiree program has been reduced to a small corner of the personnel center at Randolph AFB, Tex. The death of Pat Peek -- the heart of the program for nearly two decades -- was a shocker. Tammy Hearn was moved from the center’s Civilian Personnel Office in May to succeed Peek. The retired senior master sergeant is responsible for some 700,000 Air Force retirees and 100,000 surviving spouses enrolled in the Survivor Benefit Plan. As for the retiree council, consideration is being given to a “virtual” meeting, no small project for 18 members located around the globe. In the meantime, stay in touch with your volunteer staffs manning the RAOs. Better yet, join the staff to help ease their increasing workload. Give them a ring and stop by to learn how you can join the team. At Andrews, call 301 981-2726; at Bolling, 202 767-5244.

DENTAL CALL-INS SET FOR MAY 29

Military retirees and eligible dependents in the National Capital Area are again invited to participate in a dental screening program that could lead to potential treatment for selected members. For the 19th straight year, the 79th Medical Wing’s Advanced Education in General Dentistry program at Joint Base Andrews and Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling is offering dental examinations. **Interested persons should call the Bolling Retiree Activities Office at (202) 767-5244 from 10 a.m. to noon on Wednesday, May 29.** Calls at any other time to the RAO or dental clinics will not be honored. Dental technicians will review the caller’s dental history, looking for conditions that meet the needs for resident training. Selected retirees and dependents will be scheduled for examinations at the Andrews dental clinic, Wednesday morning, June 5, and at the Bolling clinic, Wednesday, June 26. Col. Jeffrey Denton, director of residency training, said they plan to offer examinations to as many as 96 people – 48 at each location. “Results of the exams will be reviewed by the dental staff,” he added. “Those with conditions determined to meet the educational needs of our residents will be considered for appointments, probably starting in October and running through next summer.” Col. John Moser, RAO director, coordinated arrangements for the program. He expressed his appreciation to the dental staff

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for this unique opportunity for local retirees. “We continue to be indebted to the dental staff for including the retiree community to the extent possible.” He also urged callers to keep this in mind with their patience and courtesy. “We will use three telephone lines, but you can expect some busy signals. If your call is picked up by the recorder, simply leave your number and the call will be returned. The technicians will remain until all appointments have been scheduled.”

FROM THE DIRECTOR

By Col. John Moser, Director, Retiree Activities Office



Colonel Moser

Unfortunately, I cannot predict the future! I never really believed that the Retiree Activities Offices at Joint Base Andrews and Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling would be involved with the fall-out of the sequestration mode/situation currently affecting the Department of Defense and its components. But here we are -- and I am going to have to waffle on the future of this publication. I knew that our printing contract had to be renewed, and that we had a 12-months option to renew until 2014. In normal times, that would be a given -- the 11th Wing would provide funding -- and we would have a year to negotiate a normal continuation for the publication. At this moment, we know that the contract option will be implemented. What we don't know (at press time) is whether necessary funding is available. And one cannot exist without the other.

That leaves two possibilities. Either *Still Serving* will cease publication with this issue, or we may have a grace period of 12 months to continue our efforts to provide you with a most comprehensive oversight of what is happening in the Air Force that affects you and the Air Force retirement community. The RAO mission is to serve as a primary contact point between the Active Force and its Retiree segment. There are more than 40,000 Air Force retirees in the Greater Washington Area; our most direct channel to you is with *Still Serving*. Our programming for you (Retiree Day, dental screenings, keeping you abreast of military retiree issues and concern and for retiree support of the Active Force) weighs heavily on continuing this communication link. The quick answer is a familiar one: "Put it on the Internet." *Still Serving* has always had an online accessibility. It pains me to say that only about half of our subscribers are regular users of the Net. Each year we add more users. So, this is our quandary. We can only react to reality!

I promise you that I will do my damndest to keep our communication lines open with *Still Serving*; worst case scenario, on the Net.

PACEMAKER SALUTES ACADEMY

Gen. Janet C. Wolfenbarger, Air Force Materiel Command commander, is the Air Force's only female four-star general. She was among the first 157 female cadets entering the Air Force Academy in 1976. There was a fear that standards would somehow be lowered by allowing women to attend the service academies, she recalls. "We spent four years proving that the standards, in fact, would not have to be lowered, and that women could not only survive, but actually thrive in that very challenging environment." There were 97 women among 1980 graduates, about 10 percent of the class. "Women had the same attrition rate as was traditional with all-male classes," she said. "It took me a while after graduation to crystallize in my mind the value of the academy experience. The academy...really stretched me mentally, emotionally and physically and I came out the other side realizing that I was far more capable than I ever thought I was. That knowledge brought with it a self confidence that I have relied on throughout my military career, as well as in my personal life." Women make up 9.1 percent of Air Force general officers: 1 general, 3 lieutenant generals, 12 major generals and 11 brigadier generals.



General Wolfenbarger

Still Serving is published in February, June and October by 11th Wing Retiree Activities Offices at Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, DC and Joint Base Andrews, Md., for military retirees and family members living in the National Capital Area. Content does not necessarily reflect official views, nor is endorsed by the U.S. Government or Department of Defense. Comments may be directed to the RAO, 20 MacDill Blvd, Suite 112, Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, DC 20032. Phone (202) 767-5244; E-mail RAO@afncr.af.mil; FAX (202) 404-5342. *Still Serving* may be downloaded from www.andrews.af.mil. Changes of address must be sent to Defense Finance and Accounting Service, P.O. Box 7130, London KY 40732-7130.



EXPIRATION DATES ON SOME ID CARDS

Blue retiree identification cards issued prior to December 2012 show “INDEF” as an expiration date. Since December, ID cards issued to retirees have an expiration date -- the day before the retiree’s 65th birthday. Although military retirement benefits will not expire, some changes will take effect based on Medicare eligibility. While still enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), the expiration date serves as a reminder to enroll in Medicare Part A and B to retain Tricare for Life eligibility. Those who retired before December do not need to get a new ID card because of the expiration date change. However, if your ID card is worn out or your appearance has changed enough that the picture is no longer a good likeness, you should get your card replaced. Retirees who receive the new card will get a replacement card showing the indefinite status once they turn 65. Cards issued to spouses will read “INDEF” once they turn 75. For additional information on retiree ID cards, DEERS eligibility programs and other personnel matters, call 1 800 525-0102.

JOHNSON TO LEAD ACADEMY - Lt. Gen. Michelle Johnson is the new Air Force Academy superintendent. She succeeds Lt. Gen. Michael Gould, who led the academy since 2009. Johnson was NATO’s deputy chief of staff for operations and intelligence. She is a 1981 distinguished graduate from the school and served there from 1989-92 as an assistant professor of political science, instructor pilot, and associate air officer commanding. She is the first woman to lead the academy.



Lt. Gen. Johnson

CIRCLE THE CALENDAR - The 11th Wing’s Retiree Appreciation Day is scheduled for Saturday, October 26, at Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling. The salute to all military retirees and their families is hosted by Retiree Activities Offices at Joint Base Andrews and JBAB. Col. John Moser, RAO director, said the annual event alternates between the two bases. A health fair, vehicle registration and ID card renewals augment ballroom presentations and vendor offerings. A special buffet lunch is also planned.

EXPANSION AT ARLINGTON NC - Arlington National Cemetery is the final resting place for more than 400,000 military members and their families. The cemetery’s 624 acres will grow by another 42 acres this fall with the addition of land from the former “Navy Annex” along Columbia Pike. Eight four-story wings at the annex were originally built in the 1940s as temporary warehouse space. For more than 50 years it served as Marine Corps headquarters. In 2004, the wing nearest the Pentagon was demolished to make room for the Air Force Memorial. The additional cemetery space is part of a continuing expansion for both in-ground and above-ground burials at Arlington. Construction is nearing completion of a ninth Columbarium Court. This will provide some 20,000 niches and inurnment space for up to 40,000 veterans and family members. Plans also are being developed for a 30-acre site adjacent to the Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall area.



Lt. Col. (Ret) Noyes

COLONEL NOYES HONORED - The Volunteer Excellence Award, the Air Force’s highest recognition for volunteer service, was bestowed on retired Lt. Col. Ron Noyes of Bowie, Md. Colonel Noyes was recognized for more than 20 years’ service in the Joint Base Andrews Retiree Activities Office. He was nominated for the award, authorized by the Air Force Chief of Staff, by Col. William Knight, 11th Wing Commander. In addition to weekly tours of duty in the RAO, Colonel Noyes established a “retiree” link from the base website that has attracted worldwide attention from the retiree community.

ID CARD VOLUME HIGH - Base Customer Support Elements are responsible for three main programs: ID Cards/DEERS Updates, in-processing new members and Leaveweb. High customer frequency for these services has resulted in longer than usual wait times (90 min to 3 hours) at Joint Base Andrews. Customers in need of new or renewed ID cards or DEERS registration may wish to consider use of other military facilities in the National Capital Area. There are more than 15 and some offer appointments. For additional information, call 301 981-1776.

BUDGET CHALLENGES ADDRESSED

Air Force Secretary Michael B. Donley and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III addressed budget constraints and the development of future capabilities. "Like the other services, the Air Force will work with our defense and national leadership to fine-tune our plans and programs as we confront both a dynamic security environment and the nation's fiscal challenges," Donley said. "We'll adjust and compromise as necessary," he added, "but we will need broad consensus with the Congress on the way forward to avoid a hollow military. This must be our priority." Welsh,



Secretary Donley



General Welsh

who became Air Force chief of staff last year, said Donley's tough budget decisions, reflected in the fiscal 2013 National Defense Authorization Act, translate into an active duty Air Force of about 329,000 airmen, about the same size it was when the Air Force became a separate service in 1947. "In the past 10 years, the Air Force has retired about 1,900 airplanes and dropped about 30,000 active-duty billets," he said. "None of those things is inherently bad," he said. "They are simply reflective of today's fiscal and strategic environment... the future depends on how to integrate data, how to better integrate information, how to move it quicker, how to connect platforms and sensors together... that's not as expensive as new weapons

systems, ... and it benefits us in the way we do the job today," he added. Donley said the Air Force has been through many ups and downs and the way through the challenges is to support the service's active, Air National Guard, Reserve and civilian members and their families in their work. "I am confident that by making prudent choices -- difficult decisions among force structure, readiness and modernization -- we can and will stay the world's finest air force," he said.

WARFARE MEDAL GONE - The Distinguished Warfare Medal -- introduced in February -- was eliminated in April by the Defense Department. Instead, military members who directly affect combat operations without being present will be recognized through distinguishing devices affixed to existing awards. The award criteria will be developed in coordination with the services and the Joint Staff. Objections had been raised over the medal's order of precedence. It was to be below the Distinguished Flying Cross and above the Bronze Star, placing it above the Purple Heart -- awarded to those wounded or killed in action.

WOMEN IN COMBAT - Following rescission of the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule for Women, DoD announced plans to remove gender-based barriers to service. Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh said while 99 percent of Air Force positions are currently open to women, the service will pursue opening the final 1 percent. He noted that this year marks the 20th anniversary of women serving as combat pilots. "There are 7 Air Force career fields still closed, all associated with special operations. They comprise about 3,235 positions. Women make up approximately 15 percent, or nearly 202,400, of the U.S. military's 1.4 million active personnel. Over the past decade, more than 280,000 women have deployed in support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

STROBRIDGE STEPS DOWN - One of the best friends Air Force retirees and their families have had in the past two decades has been retired Col. Steve Strobridge, Springfield, Va. This is particularly true for those residing in the National Capital Area. As director of Government Relations with the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and co-chairman of The Military Coalition (TMC), his most respected voice represented us on Capitol Hill. Among his proudest achievements has to be the birth of Tricare For Life, after years of testimony before various elements of the Congress. Colonel Strobridge completed his second career in April and joins fellow retirees in enjoying the fruits of his labor earned from a military career. His gigantic brogans are now worn by a trained successor, his MOAA deputy, retired Col. Mike Hayden, Fairfax, Va., who also was a unanimous choice as co-chairman of TMC.

NEW 'EQUITY' POLICY - Calling it "a matter of fundamental equity," the Defense Department has a new policy extending benefits to same-sex partners of service members. It reads, in part: "Taking care of our service members and honoring the sacrifices of all military families are two core values of this nation. Extending these benefits is an appropriate next step under current law to ensure that all service members receive equal support for what they do to protect this nation... One of the legal limitations to providing all benefits at this time is the Defense of Marriage Act. There are certain benefits that can only be provided to spouses as defined by that law, which is now being reviewed by the United States Supreme Court... Until then, the department will continue to comply with current law... The implementation of additional benefits will require substantial policy revisions and training..."

SHORT SERVINGS

Payment Requirements - Beneficiaries enrolled in Tricare Reserve Select (TRS) or Tricare Retired Reserve (TRR) who pay monthly premiums by check must use recurring automatic payments by credit or debit card, or by recurring electronic funds transfer from a linked bank account. For more information, call 1 877 874-2273.

Help for Clark Cemetery - Operation of the Clark Veterans Cemetery in the Philippines has been transferred to the American Battle Monuments Commission. The cemetery is the final resting place for some 8,300 American service members and their families. Clark AFB was abandoned in 1991 after ash from a volcanic explosion covered the base and surrounding cemetery. Volunteers maintained the cemetery until the long-awaited Congressional action. INSERT



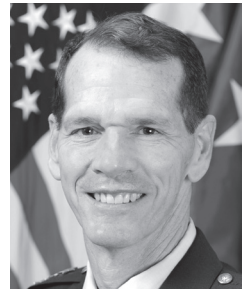
Sec Hagel

Hagel New Defense Chief - Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel earned two Purple Hearts during service as an Army sergeant in Vietnam, and represented Nebraska in the U.S. Senate from 1997 to 2009. He succeeds Leon Panetta, who had been CIA director and a former congressman from California.

Schwartz Painting Unveiled - A portrait painting of retired Gen. Norton Schwartz, the 19th Air Force chief of staff, was unveiled at the Pentagon. Artist Michele Rushworth was commissioned to paint the portrait. Schwartz retired last year after 39 years of service in the Air Force, the last four as the service's senior uniformed leader.

Virtual Wall Available - The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall, near the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, honors those who died in the Vietnam War. The Virtual Wall brings the memorial to your home. For a complete rundown on its many memorial pages, go to www.virtualwall.org

Clarke Heads ANG - Lt. Gen. Stanley E. "Sid" Clarke III is the new director of the Air National Guard. He succeeds Lt. Gen. Harry "Bud" Wyatt, who retired in January. General Clarke had been commander of the Continental U.S. North American Aerospace Defense Command Region and 1st Air Force. He is a command pilot with more than 4,000 flight hours, including the F-16.



Lt. Gen Clarke

Help Available - The Total Force Service Center at Randolph AFB, Tex., delivers personnel services to Air Force, Air National Guard, Reserve, civilian and retiree populations. The center is the virtual connection of the Air Force Personnel Center, at Randolph, and the Air Reserve Personnel Center in Denver. It provides seamless access to personnel information services and tools - any time and from any location - via 1 800 525-0102.

VA Advisors Named - Air Force veterans Thanh Dinh, Burke, Va., and Shelia Mitchell, Manassas, Va., are new members of VA's Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans. Dinh is the chief operating officer for the Odin Group and Mitchell heads Veterans at Your Service, both service-disabled small businesses.



CAP Needs Volunteers - The National Capital Wing of the Civil Air Patrol, a USAF auxiliary, is in need of volunteers with experience in files management and personnel. For more information, contact the wing administrator at 202 767-4405 at Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling.

White House Greetings - The White House will send greeting cards signed by the President to commemorate special events such as birthdays (age 80 and above) and significant wedding anniversaries. Send written request to The White House, ATTN: Greetings Office, Washington DC 20502. Include name and home address of honoree; date of occasion; birthday age or number of years of marriage. Include your phone number.

Secretary to Step Down - Air Force Secretary Michael Donley announced he will step down as the service's leader on June 21, five years to the day that he began his tenure, first as Acting Secretary and, beginning Oct. 17, 2008, as Secretary. He is the longest serving Secretary in Air Force history.

Lajes Scales Back - Lajes Field in the Azores will transition from a wing to a group with a reduction of more than 400 military personnel and 500 family members by the end of fiscal year 2014. Located on a Portuguese air base in the mid-Atlantic Ocean, the base has been in use since World War II.

VA ENHANCES HEALTH CARE FOR WOMEN

Grants to 33 VA facilities will improve emergency health care services for women veterans, expand women's health education programs for VA staff, and offer telehealth programs to female veterans in rural areas. Telehealth concepts that received grants involve tele-mental health, tele-gynecology, tele-pharmacy, and telephone maternity care



coordination. The grant program is part of VA's continuing effort to improve access and quality of care for the increasing number of women veterans seeking care at VA. Education grants will expand mini-residency training for VA providers and nurses in primary care and emergency services to include topics such as gynecology and early obstetrics emergencies, military sexual trauma, and performing breast and pelvic examinations. Women serve in every branch of the military, representing 15 percent of today's active duty military and nearly 18 percent of National Guard and Reserve forces. VA estimates women veterans will constitute 10 percent of the veteran population by 2020.

LESS PAPER WORK - VA has eliminated the need for veterans to complete an annual Eligibility Verification Report (EVR). A new process will confirm eligibility for benefits. The decision will free additional staff to focus on eliminating the compensation claims backlog. Historically, beneficiaries were required to complete an EVR each year to ensure pension benefits. VA will now work with the Internal Revenue Service and the Social Security Administration to verify continued eligibility for pension benefits. VA estimates it would have sent nearly 150,000 EVRs to beneficiaries this year. All beneficiaries receiving VA pension benefits will receive a letter explaining these changes and providing instructions on how to continue to submit their unreimbursed medical expenses. For information, call 1 800 827-1000.

REVAMPED TRANSITION – VA is partnering to build an integrated military and veteran support system. Included is a revamped Transition Assistance Program (TAP), a joint electronic medical records system, joint acquisitions decisions, better access to mental health programs and disability claims, among other issues. Overall, the collaboration is not about turf, but in improving service to veterans. VA's support of DoD's revamped TAP will create a "seamless and productive program that provides a warm hand-off from service member to new veteran status, to ensure all who have served are prepared to transition to civilian life and have access to the VA benefits and services they've earned," according to a VA spokesman. Disability claims will also become more streamlined as the two departments work together. Improved mental health service access is expected to be a joint recommendation by the two departments by the end of February.

ASSISTANCE FOR UNEMPLOYED - Unemployed veterans ages 35 to 60 can apply for up to 12 months of paid training through a program sponsored by the Departments of Labor and Veterans Affairs. Of about 900,000 U.S. veterans who are unemployed, nearly two-thirds are between ages 35 and 60, according to the Labor Department. The program provides training assistance equal to the monthly full-time payment rate under the Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty program, which pays \$1,473 per month. Participants must be enrolled in a community college or technical school program approved for VA benefits and leading to an associate degree, non-college degree or certificate. Occupations include jobs in construction, machine operation, transportation, preschool education, health care and many other fields. Labor officials said the department will offer employment assistance to successful participants.

VET CENTER NEAR YOU - Vet Centers were created in 1979 after it was determined that Vietnam veterans had readjustment difficulties. They offer mental health-centric services like individual, group and family therapy, military sexual trauma, employment assessment, drug and alcohol treatment. If you or a family member were deployed to a combat zone, you qualify for services. The centers are augmented by 50 mobile Vet Centers reaching rural areas. There are more than 300 Vet Centers. For the one nearest to you, go to ww2.va.gov/directory/guide/vetcenter.asp. Vet Centers are staffed by mental health and family professionals like psychologists and social workers.

DIGITAL PROCESSING - A nationwide transition to paperless processing of disability claims is underway at VA regional benefits offices. The new electronic claims processing system is aimed at eliminating the claims backlog in 2015. Some 20 regional offices are processing new compensation claims in a digital format. Full deployment of the system to all regional offices is expected this year. A record 1 million claims were processed during the last three fiscal years. The current backlog is the result of increased demand, a decade of war with many veterans returning with severe, complex injuries and increased outreach.

‘HANOI HILTON’ POWS LOOK BACK 40 YEARS

It's been 40 years since a C-141A Starlifter with a distinctive red cross on its tail lifted off from Hanoi with the first 40 U.S. prisoners of war released under terms of the Paris Peace Accords. By day's end, three C-141A aircraft and a C-9 would follow. In a steady flow of flights, 591 POWs were returned to American soil. Aeromedical teams on each aircraft took charge during a 2 ½- hour flight to Clark AB, near Manila, first stop on the trip home. Maj. Gen. Ed Mechenbier, the last Vietnam POW to serve in the Air Force, recalled the emotion. "When we got airborne and the frailty of being a POW turned into the reality of freedom, we yelled, cried and cheered," he said. At Clark, Navy Capt. Jeremiah Denton – later a rear admiral and a U.S. Senator -- proclaimed, "God bless America." Col. Robinson Risner, senior Air Force officer at the infamous "Hanoi Hilton," now has a statue in his likeness at the Air Force Academy. Of the Americans liberated during Operation Homecoming, 325 served in the Air Force, 138 in the Navy; 77 in the Army, 26 in the Marine Corps and 25 civilian employees of U.S. government agencies. Also later earning seats on Capitol Hill were Sen. John McCain and Rep. Sam Johnson. A dinner at the Richard Nixon Presidential Library in California honored the former POWs, recreating a dinner hosted by the president at the White House in 1973.



Maj. Gen. Mechenbier



Col. Risner

ACADEMY BOUND - Approximately 2 percent of enlisted airmen who apply to the Air Force Academy are selected each year for direct appointment. A1C Sage Keltee, an air traffic controller at Vance AFB, Okla., reports to the school in June. It took five months and a team of NCOs to help Keltee achieve his goal. He's the first active-duty airman accepted in the past two years. "His motivation and drive to accomplish goals is what motivates me to do what I do today," said MSgt. Jason Trickey, a chief controller at Vance. "I was ecstatic," Keltee said, "because I was accepted into the academy directly, instead of having to go through the prep school." After he graduates, Keltee would like to be a pilot or an engineer.

SPACE TRAFFIC CONTROL - Members of the 1st and 7th Space Operations Squadron at Schriever AFB, Colo., took notice when an upper stage Russian rocket disintegrated in low earth orbit. The break up introduced an estimated 500 pieces of debris into an area where the U.S. operates a multitude of satellites, further congesting an already crowded orbit around Earth. The event sheds light on an ever-growing issue for the space and satellite industry. The idea that big space would someday become crowded was more theory than fact. "Space is growing seemingly smaller as more objects are now orbiting Earth," said Lt. Col. Mike Manor, 1 SOPS commander. A collision with something as small as a bolt, a rivet, even bits of shrapnel, traveling at a high rate of speed can render a satellite inoperable, if not totally destroy it, thus it's becoming ever more important to accurately track such debris. "When the Wright brothers first took flight the skies were open. Gradually, more aircraft shared the skies and eventually we reached a point where we needed air traffic controllers and regulation to keep air travel safe. Now, we've taken the rudimentary steps for space traffic control."

BALLOONS NOTHING NEW - Intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support critical to operations in Afghanistan got its start 150 years ago, when a balloonist showed President Abraham Lincoln how a gas-filled balloon could help the Union Army prevail in the Civil War. The idea wasn't totally new. The French used balloons in 1794 to observe Dutch and French movements during the Battle of Fleurus. President Lincoln watched the balloon's ISR capabilities as a tethered balloon floated 500 feet over Washington. The balloon's three-man crew could see 25 miles in every direction. Convinced that balloons could provide a critical advantage on the battlefield, President Lincoln established the Union Balloon Corps, only to have it disbanded in 1863, a victim of bureaucracy and logistics. It was run by a civilian organization that wasn't able to work smoothly with the Army. The balloons also required an entire company to move and inflate. Today, in an age of supersonic aircraft and satellites, balloons continue to provide critical intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance in ongoing military operations. Now unmanned, they're equipped with cameras, electronic sensors and communication equipment to gather intelligence and provide communications links.

YOU PAY FOR HEALTH CARE FRAUD, ABUSE

Health care fraud and abuse cost American taxpayers billions of dollars each year. Fraud is intentional deception or misrepresentation that enables someone to obtain an unauthorized benefit or payment. Abuse occurs when providers supply services or products that are medically unnecessary or that do not meet professional standards. Tricare users are an important partner in the ongoing fight against fraud and abuse. Always review the explanation of benefits (EOB) you



receive after health care services. It should list the services and supplies you received. If you find differences between the services reflected on your EOB and the services you received, call the toll-free number listed on the EOB. Differences do not always indicate fraud, but they can indicate mistakes that may result in improper claims reimbursement from Tricare or cause your medical record to be incorrect. If you have any concerns about your medical

record, you should follow up with your health care provider to ensure the services you received are reflected properly. To learn more about fraud and abuse, visit tricare.mil/fraud. To report fraud or abuse regarding the Tricare pharmacy program, contact Express Scripts, Inc. at fraudtip@express-scripts.com.

PRIME SERVICE REDUCED - Tricare Prime service areas will be limited to a 40-mile radius of a military hospital, clinic or base closure site, effective October 1. Each of the 170,000 affected beneficiaries will be notified by Tricare of the change from Prime to Tricare Standard. Active-duty members and their dependents and Tricare For Life beneficiaries are not affected by this change. Out-of-pocket, fee-for-service cost of Tricare Standard will cost a bit more, depending on the frequency of health care use and visits. No cost applies for preventive care such as mammograms, vaccines, cancer screening, prostate examinations and routine check-ups. Officials estimate the changes will lower overall Tricare costs by \$45 million to \$56 million a year, depending on the number of beneficiaries who choose to remain in Prime.

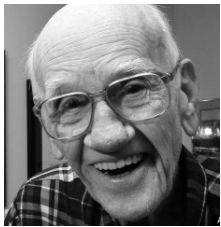
PHARMACY COPAYMENTS - Copayments have been increased on brand name and non-formulary medications that are not filled at military hospitals or clinics. The copay for generic medications stays at \$5 when a prescription is filled at a network pharmacy. There is no copay when generic prescriptions are filled through Tricare Home Delivery. The new copay for a 30-day supply of a brand name medication purchased at a retail network pharmacy is \$17 and beneficiaries using Home Delivery pay \$13 for a 90-day supply of brand name drugs. Copay for formulary medications are \$44 at retail pharmacies and \$43 through Home Delivery. A new law directs that copays increase annually by the same percentage as retiree cost-of-living adjustments. When a COLA increase is less than a dollar, copays will be delayed a year and combined with the next adjustment. Pharmacies at military hospitals and clinics continue to provide medications with no copays. Visit www.TRICARE.mil/pharmacycosts for more details.

TOBACCO USE PROHIBITED - Tobacco use is prohibited on Air Force installations except in designated tobacco areas and housing units. Tobacco use includes, but is not limited to, cigars, cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, stem pipes, water pipes, hookahs and smokeless products that are chewed, dipped, or sniffed. All medical treatment facilities will be tobacco-free by September. The medical treatment campus encompasses the facility as well as its parking lots, lawns and "other outdoor areas contiguous with the medical treatment facility." Tobacco use is also prohibited for airmen in uniform or during school hours in training courses to include professional military education, officer training school, technical training and inter-service training programs. Tricare beneficiaries who use tobacco are encouraged to review resources at DoD's tobacco cessation website, www.ucequit2.org.

TRICARE FOR RESERVISTS - Tricare has affordable healthcare programs available for Air Force Reserve retirees -- including "gray-area retirees." Reservists who retire before age 60 are eligible for Tricare Retired Reserve coverage while they are in the "gray area." This is the waiting period between retiring from active service and receiving retirement pay at age 60. While on active-duty for more than 30 days, reservists are covered by Tricare Prime. However, reservists could be without healthcare insurance between active-duty tours. To ensure coverage for themselves and their families, reservists can enroll in Tricare Reserve Select. Both "Select" and "Retired Reserve" provide health coverage including: emergency care; outpatient visits, hospitalization, maternity care, mental/behavioral health care, prescriptions and preventive care such as wellness exams and immunizations. At age 60, Retired Reserve coverage ends and retirees are eligible for coverage through Tricare Prime, Standard or Extra.

VA BURIAL INFORMATION GOES DIGITAL

The Department of Veterans Affairs, in partnership with the Internet-based genealogy research firm Ancestry.com, has brought burial records from historic national cemetery ledgers into the digital age. The effort makes the collection accessible to researchers and Ancestry.com subscribers. From the 1860s until the mid-20th century, Army personnel tracked national cemetery burials in hand-written burial ledgers. VA's National Cemetery Administration duplicated about 60 ledgers representing 36 cemeteries. NCA transferred the original ledgers to the National Archives and Records Administration. The burial records include name, grade, company/regiment, date of death, age at death, date of burial and grave number. Many Civil War soldiers were buried where they fell in battle or in temporary cemeteries. The files can be accessed by VA personnel and employees of two other federal agencies that maintain national cemeteries -- Interior and Defense. Ledger data is also available at all NARA facilities and public libraries that subscribe to Ancestry.com. NCA will use the database to answer requests from the public. The general public may access the database on their personal devices through Ancestry.com's regular subscription service. VA operates 131 national cemeteries in 39 states and Puerto Rico, and 33 soldiers' lots and monument sites. Seventy-two VA cemeteries date from the Civil War. More than 3.7 million Americans -- from the Revolutionary War to operations in Iraq and Afghanistan -- are buried in VA cemeteries.



Maj. Griffin

DOOLITTLE RAIDER DIES - Retired Maj. Thomas C. Griffin, one of the Doolittle Raiders, died in Cincinnati, Feb. 26. He was 96. Major Griffin served as navigator on one of the 16 B-25 bombers under the command of then-Lt. Col. Jimmy Doolittle that flew from USS Hornet to bomb Tokyo in 1942. He bailed out over China and made his way to allied lines. He later spent 22 months as a prisoner of war in Germany after his plane was shot down in 1943. His death leaves four surviving Doolittle Raiders: Lt. Col. Richard Cole; Lt. Col. Bob Hite; Lt. Col. Edward Saylor; and SSgt. David Thatcher, all in their 90s. Colonel Hite was unable to make the 71st and final reunion in April. There are 80 silver goblets with the name of each raider inscribed. The men toast their fallen comrades and turn over their goblets. There also is a bottle of cognac from 1896, the year of Doolittle's birth. The final two survivors will open the bottle.

NEW ARLINGTON DATABASE - A massive electronic database detailing gravesites of about 400,000 people buried at Arlington National Cemetery is now available. It can be accessed through the cemetery's website www.arlingtoncemetery.mil. A viewer can see when the person was buried and the dates of their birth and death. Photos of the front and back of the headstone can also be viewed. About 99.4 percent of the nearly 260,000 gravesites, niches and markers have been verified. The remaining few deal largely with some of the cemetery's oldest graves and records, which date to the Civil War.

FUNERAL ASSISTANCE - The Department of Veterans Affairs has opened an online funeral directors resource kit. Funeral directors may use the kit when helping veterans and their families make burial arrangements in VA national cemeteries or in Arlington National Cemetery, operated by the Department of Army. The website enables helps families plan burials and apply for VA memorial benefits. Videos are available in English and Spanish. The website is available at www.cem.va.gov/cem/funeraldirector.asp. VA maintains 3.2 million gravesites in 131 VA national cemeteries and interred more than 118,000 veterans and family members in fiscal year 2012. Information on VA burial benefits can be obtained from national cemetery offices, from the Internet at www.cem.va.gov or by calling VA at 1 800 827-1000. To make burial arrangements at a VA national cemetery, call the cemetery scheduling office at 800 535-1117. For information about interments at Arlington NC, call 1 877 907-8585.

NEW SUICIDE FIGURES - A comprehensive VA report on veterans who die by suicide includes state data for veterans who had not received health care services from VA. The percentage of veterans who died by suicide has decreased slightly since 1999, while the total number of veterans who died by suicide increased. The Veteran Crisis Line (1 800 273-8255) is credited with 26,000 rescues of suicidal veterans. This new information allows VA to better identify where those veterans at risk may be located and improve its ability to target specific suicide interventions and outreach activities. Suicide Prevention Coordinators are available at all VA medical centers and large outpatient facilities.

CREDIT CARD FEES COSTLY TO EXCHANGES

Use of bank-issued debit and credit cards at exchange stores last year cost the military community more than \$62 million in fees. One way shoppers can help reduce costs and strengthen their exchange benefit is use of the Military Star Card. Unlike bank cards, swiping a The Military Star Card is administered by the exchange and revenue generated is shared with military communities through contributions to quality-of-life programs. The Military Star Card also benefits the cardholder through gas savings during the year as well as 10-percent savings on food purchases at exchange restaurants. Two-thirds of earnings generated at exchange activities are paid to morale, welfare and recreation programs, while the other third is invested in improvements that enhance the shopping experience. The Military Star Card is accepted at all Army and Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard Exchange activities, as well as the Exchange Online store at www.shopmyexchange.com.



EXCHANGE PARTNERS POPULAR - While some retailers have scaled back on merchandise or services, the Army & Air Force Exchange Service continues to seek the assistance of local businesses to increase the product selection at exchange outlets. Partner businesses, called concessions, operate in exchange-provided space, primarily in the retail mall area. Benefits include contracts based on a percentage of revenue, a variety of space and merchandising setups and the convenience of being located with the anchor retail store and food outlets. The exchange also assists in marketing and promoting partner businesses to help maximize awareness on and around the installation. Exchange shoppers continue to demonstrate a strong demand for new and unique merchandise. Partnering with the exchange provides local businesses exposure to a great deal of foot traffic as well as the opportunity to serve military families.

NEW EXCHANGE AT BELVOIR - The nation's largest military exchange store opens next month at Fort Belvoir, Va. The 270,000-square foot facility, two blocks from the present store, will offer one-stop service for all exchange activity on the post. Included will be military clothing sales, home and garden items and a gun shop. Other new additions will be a Starbucks, Pizza Hut, Popeye's Chicken and a Things Remembered gift shop. Current shops will remain the same along with the barber shop, beauty salon, optical shop and food court outlets. The refill pharmacy will also continue operations. Ultimately, the present exchange structure will be razed and the neighboring commissary re-located in that space.

FREQUENT PRICE CHECKS - The Army & Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) use Market Price Coordinators for extra savings for its clientele. The coordinators conduct periodic checks at convenience, liquor and big box stores, comparing AAFES prices on top selling items in each department with local competition. "From soda and snacks to washers and driers, these associates ensure that our store prices are comparable, if not lower, than the competition," said AAFES Senior Enlisted Advisor CMSgt. Jeffrey Helm. Pre-tax shelf prices are then set to be comparable to the competition. Shelf prices are of primary concern because all products available at the exchange, except for gasoline, are not subject to sales tax. In addition to regular, local price surveys, AAFES offers a "We'll Match It!" program that acts as a last line of defense to ensure military shoppers always receive the lowest price possible when shopping the exchange. If a shopper sees a price differential of less than \$10 they can tell the cashier who will match it on the spot. Anyone who reports a price difference of \$10 dollars or more need only bring a current local competitor's ad to receive the reduced price.

RECORD SALES YEAR - Commissary customers found their benefit well "worth the trip" in fiscal 2012 with historic numbers in savings, shopping transactions and sales. At 31.2 percent savings when compared to commercial stores, military commissaries saved their customers more than \$2.76 billion. Authorized customers made 97,822,042 shopping trips, an increase of more than 1.6 million from fiscal 2011. Defense Commissary Agency record sales of \$6.09 billion were the highest since \$6.02 billion in fiscal 1992. Then, the agency had 411 stores versus 247 today. Sales helped generate about \$312.5 million in surcharge funds. The 5 percent surcharge is used to fund new stores, equipment and renovate existing facilities. Commissaries redeemed nearly 113.3 million coupons in fiscal 2012 for a customer savings of about \$104.2 million.

WARM WELCOME AT ENLISTED VILLAGE

The Air Force Enlisted Village was founded in 1967 after a survey conducted by the Air Force Sergeants Association found there were almost 50,000 widows of enlisted men living in poverty. With the help of Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John Ryan and his wife, a group of active-duty and retired noncommissioned officers started the village with the goal of providing a home for spouses of surviving enlisted Air Force members. "Our mission at the village is simply to provide a home," said retired CMSAF Jim Binnicker, the village's chief executive officer. "It started out with only Air Force enlisted widows, but over the years we have changed that to include a lot of different kinds of people." We take care of Air Force enlisted widows first and foremost," he added. "That's the priority. Then we have moral dependents, when it's just the right thing to do." Located in Shalimar, Fla., Bob Hope Village and Theresa Village offer independent living. The Hawthorn House provides assisted living and memory care. Nearby are Eglin AFB and Hurlburt Field. In addition to monthly resident fees, other funding comes from donations and the Air Force Assistance Fund. For additional information, call 1 800 258-1413 or visit www.afenlistedwidows.org.



SEQUESTRATION HITS MUSEUM - The National Museum of the U. S. Air Force has shuttered its Presidential Gallery and its Research and Development Gallery "until further notice," due to the budget cutbacks resulting from sequestration. "This was not an easy decision, as we have several popular exhibits in the Presidential and R&D Galleries, including President Kennedy's Air Force One and the XB-70 Valkyrie," said Museum Director Jack Hudson. "Our goal has been to make every effort to maintain museum operations to the maximum extent possible, and we hope to reopen these galleries as soon as possible," he said. The museum will remain open during normal business hours, and the Air Force and Air Force Museum Foundation will fund the utility costs each day the museum is open. The museum is located adjacent to Wright-Patterson AFB, near Dayton, Ohio. It is open seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission and parking are free.

WWI MEMORIAL SOUGHT - Interest in a national World War I memorial in the nation's capital continues. David DeJonge, president and co-founder of the WWI Memorial Foundation, wants Congress to consider a memorial. "There would be no better way to commemorate these brave Americans than to honor them with a memorial on the Mall," he said. Others have expressed concern that the Mall is crowded with memorials. Pershing Park has been suggested as a suitable site for a World War I memorial. It has a statue of General of the Armies John J. Pershing, along with artwork detailing major battles in WWI. Private funds would be needed .

LIBRARIES OFFER HELP - Need assistance setting up a budget, learning a new language or doing your homework? Look no further than your online Air Force library, where Air Force library staff work to meet customers' needs in an evolving digital world. The libraries also offer MyiLibrary eBooks, OneClickdigital and OverDrive. In addition, there are offer opportunities for self-improvement and personal development through the Universal Class program. Any authorized Air Force library customer is eligible to register for more than 540 online classes in 30 different subject areas. To enroll, contact or visit your local library for the access code to create n account. If you're doing a project on an unfamiliar country, you'll find everything you need on CultureGrams, which carries detailed cultural information on more than 200 countries. Business and technology professionals can take advantage of Safari Books, an e-reference resource that offers more than 13,000 titles. For more information about Air Force libraries and other quality of life programs, go to www.usafservices.com or www.myairstorcelife.com

SUPPORT YOUR MEMORIAL - The United States Air Force Memorial is envisioned as a national place of reverence, remembrance and celebration for the Air Force "family" and all Americans. The memorial was dedicated in 2006 and is located on an elevated promontory, adjacent to the southern boundary of Arlington National Cemetery, overlooking the Pentagon. The Air Force Memorial Foundation is a tax-exempt, charitable, historical, and educational organization. The foundation, affiliated with the Air Force Association, works with the active force to help maintain the memorial, which is funded almost entirely by private contributions. For more information, call 703 979-0674 or email afmf@airforcememorial.org.

Retiree Activities Office
20 MacDill Blvd.
Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, DC 20032

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE PAID
WASHINGTON, DC
PERMIT NO. 109

TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

| Joint Base Andrews | Activity | JBAB |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Area Code (301/240) | | (202) |
| 981-7087 | Airman & Family Readiness Ctr. | 767-0450 |
| 981-1854 | Air Terminal (Pax Svcs) | None |
| 981-9362 | Casualty Assistance, SBP | 767-5651 |
| 981-2111 | Chaplain | 767-5900 |
| 568-3100 | Club | 563-8400 |
| (240) 857-6512 | Commissary | 767-4695 |
| 702-5500 | Credit Union | 562-5300 |
| (240) 857-2806 | Dental Clinic | 404-5519 |
| (240) 857-2888 | Eye Clinic | 1 888 999-1212 |
| 568-2222 | Exchange | 562-3000 |
| 1 877 729-2339 | Finance Office | 1 877 729-2339 |
| 1 888 999-1212 | Hospital/Clinic Apts | 1 888 999-1212 |
| 981-1776 | ID Cards, DEERS | 404-3281 |
| (240) 612-5750 | Legal Assistance | 767-5297 |
| 981-6454 | Library | 767-5578 |
| 981-4614 | Lodging | 404-7050 |
| (240) 857-4565 | Pharmacy | 767-5626 |
| (240) 612-4428 | Public Affairs | 767-4781 |
| 981-2726 | Retiree Activities Office | 767-5244 |
| 981-2001 | Sec. Police (Non-emergency) | 767-5000 |
| 981-1110 | Telephone Locator | 767-4522 |
| 981-4109 | Tickets & Tours | 404-6576 |
| 981-0689 | Visitors Center | 767-8958 |
| National Numbers | | |
| Total Force Service Center, Randolph AFB | | 1 800 525-0102 |
| DEERS | | 1 800 538-9552 |
| Tricare Information | | 1 877 363-6337 |
| Tricare (North Region) | | 1 877 874-2273 |
| Tricare Mail-Order Pharmacy | | 1 866 363-8667 |
| Delta Dental | | 1 888 838-8737 |
| Defense Finance & Accounting Service | | 1 800 321-1080 |
| Social Security | | 1 800 772-1213 |
| VA Benefits | | 1 800 827-1000 |
| VA Insurance | | 1 800 669-8477 |
| Air Force Billeting | | 1 888 235-6343 |
| Army Billeting | | 1 800 462-7691 |
| Navy Billeting | | 1 800 628-9466 |